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For the latest Green Flag news please click [here](#) to visit the GreenSpace website.

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#### **Nature Play - Simple and fun ideas for all**

This practical guide on nature play offers fun, simple and cost effective examples of play ideas from easily sourced materials. It will help Forestry Commission staff and other landowners or managers wanting to improve informal play provision for children. Its presentational style, through photographs, also illustrates clearly to practitioners and partner organisations what is meant by nature play.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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#### **Councils face £7bn S106 Drop**

Local councils could face a £7bn fall in Section 106 contributions from developers this year as the impact of the credit crunch worsens. According to consultancy EC Harris, in the financial year to March 2008, local authorities received as much as £9bn in planning contributions. However, as a result of the fall out in the developer market, the consultancy expects a funding gap in 2009 of £6-7bn. EC Harris says £75bn of regeneration developments with S106 contributions are stalled and both developers and banks with projects in default, are actively re-negotiating up to 50% of the S106 contributions reductions to previously agreed S106 contributions.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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#### **Call for free up S106 cash**

MPs have called on the minister for housing Margaret Beckett to simplify the rules on the use of money collected in Section 106 agreements.

In a House of Commons Debate yesterday John Leech MP told the minister that £160,000 of Section 106 money from one development has sat in Manchester city council's bank account for up to four years because of the rules and regulations on how it can be spent.

He asked if she would commit to simplifying the rules, so that this money could be spent more quickly.

Lindsay Hoyle MP said he believed a total of £4 billion of Section 106 money is being held in local authority bank accounts across the country.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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#### **Play England News Letter**

Two Play England Regional Development Officers have recently attended the Play England local play indicators training in London.

Performance indicators for play seek to measure how well a local authority is performing in providing children with opportunities for play in their local area.

The two officer thought the training was really worthwhile, and there was also good feedback from those local authorities who attended.

Click [here](#) to read more from the Play England Newsletter.

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#### **Community payback cleans up graffiti**

A scheme which puts vandals to work cleaning up vandalism and graffiti in Southampton was praised today by the government's Crime and Justice Adviser Louise Casey.

Ms Casey visited the Polygon area of Southampton, where offenders on the high-visibility 'orange jacket' Community Payback (CP) scheme have been removing graffiti as part of a wider operation to tackle vandalism in the city. The clean-up will be the first time Southampton City Council and Hampshire Probation Service put out advertising boards during the work to publicise that this is a CP scheme.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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### **Vulnerable war memorials saved**

English Heritage and the Wolfson Foundation today (18 February 2009) announced 12 grants worth nearly £50,000 to help save England's war memorials in need of conservation and repair. The grants are being made to local groups under a scheme that is run jointly with War Memorials Trust to ensure that vulnerable memorials continue to honour those who have died in conflict. Click [here](#) for more information.

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### **Team selected for Manchester park revival**

Broadway Malyan, FoRM Associates and Gifford have been chosen to design Manchester's Irwell city park.

An 8km linear park will follow the River Irwell through the Manchester, Salford and Trafford council areas, linking Manchester's city centre with Salford's Media City site.

The three councils have worked with Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company and the North West Development Agency on the £40 million project, which is due to open in March 2010.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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### **The Boris Johnson approach to funding green space in the capital**

London mayor Boris Johnson has revealed the winners in his park makeover competition.

Londoners were invited to vote on a shortlist of parks across the capital in order to fund improvements to make them more attractive and safer for local communities. More than 110,000 people cast their vote and the winners are: Lordship Recreation Ground in Haringey; Dollis Valley Green Walk in Barnet; Mayesbrook park in Barking and Dagenham; Fairlop Waters Country Park in Redbridge; Brent River Park in Ealing; Little Wormwood Scrubs in Kensington and Chelsea; Parish Wood Park in Bexley; Avery Hill Park in Greenwich; Crane Riverside Park in Richmond and Hounslow; Wandle Park in Croydon.

Please click [here](#) for more information.

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### **A new approach to providing Local Nature Reserves in the capital, but are they accessible?**

A project to build a network of seven roof-top nature reserves across the capital is to be launched by writer and broadcaster Germaine Greer today.

The three-year project is funded through SITA Trust's Enriching Nature Programme and will install living roofs on buildings including the Transport for London headquarters in St James Park, Ford Motor Company at Dagenham, the University of East London (Stratford) and Lewisham Town Hall.

Each roof will include wildflower meadows, sandy areas and shingle in order to recreate the habitats used by threatened species. The living roofs are being specially designed by wildlife charity Buglife and leading green roof experts LivingRoofs.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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**Remember to use our website for information on current issues, minutes of meetings, job adverts and resources and much more. Let us know of any comments you may have on the website or suggestions for items to be included.**

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**New names have been added to our network. If you are one of these it is because you are believed to have an interest in Green Space issues in the East Midlands. Currently network contacts receive News and Information, notice of related meetings, case study information and can participate in network consultations – some of these services may be restricted to GreenSpace East Midlands paying members in the future, but are currently free. If you or any established contact no longer wish to be included, please notify us and your name will be removed. If you have colleagues who would like to be included, please ask them to forward their contact details.**

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